NOTE IV.

ON GYMNURA ALBA GIEBEL

BY

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Mammals living in the tropics generally are greenish or blackish colored or have a lively reddish or red tinge; white mammals are great exceptions, nay there are only a few examples known, for instance the Madagascar *Propithecus sericeus*, the South American *Diclidurus albus*, the males of the Moluccan *Cuscus orientalis*. A highly interesting example of the kind is *Gymnura alba* known only from Borneo. It seems to be a rather rare animal like the other eldest known species of this genus, *Gymnura Rafflesii* 1) from Malacca and Sumatra.

G. alba (Zeitschrift für die gesammten Naturwissenschaften, 1863, p. 277, T. 1, 2) is known from the northern parts of the island as well as from the southern, from British north Borneo and from Banjermassing: in Büttikofer's collections is a specimen from Smitau, Central Borneo.

A superficial resemblance may have lead to the idea that this animal represents the albino-form of *G. Rafflesii*, it should however strike everyone that in no part of the large island of Borneo ever a dark specimen has been dis-

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1) It would be more correct to write *Gymnura gymnura* (Raffles), as Raffles called the by him described typical specimen, *Viverra gymnura*.

covered; indeed, a distribution of an albino-variety standing alone and at the same time altogether inexplicable!

That we have to deal here with more than a local variety appears if more closely examined; the white (*yellowish white* it is and not a pure white) animal is much larger and stouter in all dimensions, moreover there are several differences in the bony parts too, as I demonstrated in my former papers 1) on the subject; a very important characteristic however hitherto not recorded is that in *G. Rafflesii* the claws of the fore feet are about *half the length* of the claws of the hind feet, in *G. alba* however the claws of the fore feet are very small, about *one fourth* of the size of those of the hind feet, so that in *G. alba* the fore-claws are not curved at all; they are too small.

It is a well known fact that *G. Rafflesii* is clothed with long hairs, especially on the back they attain a very large size; in *G. alba* however all the hairs are short, so that there is no trace of a kind of crista on the back as is to observe in *G. Rafflesii.*

Here are some dimensions of Büttikofer's specimen (alcoholic):

	Mm.
Length of head and body.	343
» » tail	235
» » hind foot.	71
Distance from ear to eye	25
» » eye to end of muzzle	50

This specimen is a female and Büttikofer remarks that »*the iris is black*". True albino's have — as everybody knows — red or reddish eyes.

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1) Notes from the Leyden Museum, 1881 and 1885.